

Message Text

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PAGE 01 WELLIN 00399 01 OF 03 260516Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-02 ISO-00 ONY-00 /013 W
-----019973 260624Z /20

P 260445Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4806
INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
CINCPAC HONOLULU
CINCPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI
CNO WASHDC
COMSEVENTHFLT
COMSUBPAC
USS PINTADO
/CTF SEVEN FOUR
AMEMBASSY SUVA
AMCONSUL AUCKLAND POUCH

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 WELLINGTON 00399

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MNUC, MARR, PINT, NZ, US
SUBJECT: USS PINTADO VISIT TO AUCKLAND, JANUARY 16-22;
WRAP-UP

REF: (A) WELLINGTON 0263, (B) STATE 14580 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: BY EVERY MEASURE, THE PINTADO'S SIX-DAY VISIT TO AUCKLAND MUST BE REGARDED AS A SUCCESS. IN EMBASSY'S OPINION THE VISIT ACHIEVED AT LEAST THE FOLLOWING:
(A) STRENGTHENED THE US-GNZ DEFENSE RELATIONS AND BOLSTERED THE MULDOON GOVERNMENT'S RESOLVE TO PERMIT CONTINUED NPW VISITS TO NZ PORTS BY ITS ANZUS ALLY; (B) ISOLATED THOSE POLITICALLY OPPOSING NPW'S FROM THE PURELY ECOLOGY-MINDED; (C) REAPED PUBLICITY WHICH WAS OVERWHELMINGLY POSITIVE;
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(D) EXPOSED AND APPARENTLY HELD TO PUBLIC RIDICULE MANY OF THE ANTI-NPW PROTEST ORGANIZERS AND MEMBERS; (E) PRODUCED NO DISCERNIBLE DEGREE OF ANTI-AMERICANISM; (F) AFFORDED THE PINTADO OFFICERS AND CREW EXCELLENT HOSPITALITY AND R&R. EMBASSY CONCURS IN SUGGESTED REPLY TO OPPOSITION LEADER ROWLING PROVIDED IN REFTTEL B AND URGES A FURTHER NPW VISIT WITHIN THE NEXT 90 DAYS WHICH WILL CONSOLIDATE THE GAINS

ALREADY ACHIEVED AND DEMONSTRATE THAT FUTURE NPW VISITS WILL INDEED BE ROUTINE. END SUMMARY.

2. REFTTEL A PROVIDED ADDRESSEES EMBASSY'S INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF PINTADO'S VISIT TO AUCKLAND, INCLUDING THE DRAMA OF SUBMARINE'S ENTRY INTO THE HARBOR AND THE SUBSEQUENT ANTI-CLIMAX OF ALL OTHER PROTEST ACTIVITY. REMAINDER OF THE PINTADO'S R&R STAY IN AUCKLAND WAS INCIDENT FREE AND AS ROUTINE AS COULD HAVE BEEN HOPED. BY VIRTUALLY EVERY MEASURE THE VISIT SHOULD BE MARKED AS A SUCCESS. IN EMBASSY'S OPINION THE VISIT ACHIEVED AT LEAST THE FOLLOWING:

(A) STRENGTHENED US-NZ DEFENSE RELATIONS AND BOLSTERED THE GNZ'S RESOLVE TO CONTINUE PERMISSION FOR NPW VISITS IN NEW ZEALAND PORTS:

THE GNZ, AND PARTICULARLY PRIME MINISTER MULDOON, WAS CONCERNED THAT THE LONG HIATUS (16 MONTHS) BETWEEN THE LAST PREVIOUS VISITS OF AMERICAN NPW'S AND THE PINTADO VISIT WOULD RESULT IN THE PINTADO BECOMING ANOTHER CAUSE CELEBRE. AT THE SAME TIME, THE PRIME MINISTER HAS MAINTAINED A RESOLVE TO WELCOME ANY AND EVERY AMERICAN NPW, WHATEVER THE POLITICAL COST. HE SAW THE CHRISTMAS/SUMMER HOLIDAY TIMING OF PINTADO'S PROPOSED VISIT AS A TACTICAL ADVANTAGE AND IMMEDIATELY ANNOUNCED THE VISIT HIMSELF. MOMENTARY GRIZZLING ON THE PART OF NEW ZEALAND
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WORKING LEVEL OFFICIALS WHOSE HOLIDAY PLANS WOULD BE DISRUPTED BY A NPW VISIT CAME TO AN ABRUPT HALT FOLLOWING TELEPHONE CALL FROM AMBASSADOR TO PM MULDOON AND PRIMIN'S IMMEDIATE ADMONITION TO ALL CONCERNED THAT HE WANTED THE PINTADO, IN JANUARY, IN AUCKLAND, AND TIED UP AT THE HARBOR'S MAIN WHARF, JELICOE. WITH THE WORD FROM ON TOP, ORGANIZATION AND COOPERATION THROUGHOUT THE GNZ WAS THE EASIEST AND QUICKEST OF ANY OF THE THREE NPW VISITS. RNZN, USN AND NZ POLICE COORDINATION WAS PARTICULARLY OUTSTANDING. THE RNZN HAD A RARE AND WELCOMED OPPORTUNITY TO EXERCISE WITH A NPW, AND THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL REPERCUSSIONS, AT LEAST IN THE SHORT-RUN, MUST BE QUITE AGREEABLE TO MULDOON. (IN A PRIVATE REMARK TO AMBASSADOR ON JANUARY 26, PRIMIN EXPRESSED ELATION AT THE VISIT AND REVEALED THAT HE HAD SENT PRESIDENT CARTER A TELEGRAM TO THAT EFFECT. EMBASSY WILL OBTAIN A COPY AND REPEAT.)

(B) ISOLATION OF THE POLITICALLY MOTIVATED FROM THE ECOLOGY-MINDED:

IN 1976 THE ANTI-NPW SENTIMENT WAS A HODGE-PODGE OF PEOPLE AND GROUPS SUPPORTING AND OPPOSING A VARIETY OF NUCLEAR

ISSUES -- PRO SOUTH PACIFIC NUCLEAR WEAPONS FREE ZONE,
ANTI-NUCLEAR WEAPONS, ANTI-NPW; SOME OPPOSED TO ANYTHING
DESCRIBED AS NUCLEAR AND OTHERS FEARFUL ONLY OF THE
ENVIRONMENTAL DANGERS OF A NUCLEAR REACTOR IN NEW ZEALAND.
THE EMBASSY HAS FELT FOR SOME TIME THAT WITH THE 1977 DE
FACTO DECISION OF THE GNZ NOT TO CONSIDER CONSTRUCTION OF
A NUCLEAR POWER PLANT IN NEW ZEALAND FOR AT LEAST ANOTHER
10-15 YEARS, ANOTHER NPW VISIT WOULD ATTRACT A SIGNIFI-

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-02 ISO-00 ONY-00 /013 W
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FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4807
INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
CINCPAC HONOLULU
CINCPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI
CNO WASHDC
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USS PINTADO
CTF SEVEN FOUR
AMEMBASSY SUVA
AMCONSUL AUCKLAND POUCH

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CANTLY SMALLER, BUT PROBABLY MORE POLITICALLY MOTIVATED,
PROTEST GROUP. IN FACT, THIS APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN WHAT
OCCURRED. THE APPEAL OF THE FEW PROTESTORS WAS
ESSENTIALLY ANTI-US, ANTI-ANZUS, ANTI-BIG POWER, AND PRO
THIRD WORLD. THE PALE SUPPORT GIVEN THE PROTESTORS BY
THE NZ LABOR PARTY MEMBERSHIP AND THE TRADE UNION RANK AND
FILE LEFT THIS POLITICAL GROUP IN ALMOST EMBARRASSING
ISOLATION. (BOTH THE LABOR PARTY AND FEDERATION OF LABOR
ARE ON RECORD, BY RESOLUTIONS OF THEIR ANNUAL CONFERENCES,
TO ACTIVELY OPPOSE THE VISITS OF NPW'S IN NZ PORTS. THE
COMMUNIST-DOMINATED AUCKLAND TRADES COUNCIL, AND IN
PARTICULAR ITS PRO-SOVIET PRESIDENT "BILL" ANDERSEN, HAD
MADE VIGOROUS APPEALS FOR AGGRESSIVE TRADE UNION AND LABOR
PARTY ACTION AGAINST THE VISIT.) ASIDE FROM THE ROWLING

TELEGRAM TO PRESIDENT CARTER (WELLINGTON'S 0181) AND THE
FAINT-HEARTED SUPPORT OF THREE OTHER LABOR PARTY MP'S, HOWEVER
THE TRADE UNION LEADERSHIP AND RANK AND FILE, AS WELL AS
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THE AVERAGE LABOR PARTY SUPPORTER, VIRTUALLY ROLLED OVER
ON THE ISSUE. FEW SEEMED WILLING TO BECOME IDENTIFIED
WITH THE PRO-SOVIET, ANTI-US SENTIMENTS OF THE PROTEST
LEADERS.

(C) HIGHLY FAVORABLE PUBLICITY:

THROUGHOUT THE VISIT AND INDEED IN PRIOR REPORTAGE, PRESS
TREATMENT OF THE VISIT HAS BEEN LARGELY FAVORABLE.
PROTEST PREPARATIONS AND ACTIVITY WAS WIDELY COVERED BUT
FOR THE MOST PART NOT SYMPATHETICALLY. THE PINTADO'S
ARRIVAL AND ITS ENCOUNTER WITH THE IRRESPONSIBLE "PEACE
SQUADRON" IN AUCKLAND HARBOR WAS WIDELY AND REPEATEDLY
REPORTED BY EVERY SEGMENT OF THE NZ MEDIA. WITH EACH
REPETITION, MEDIA DISPOSITION AGAINST THE ACTIONS OF THE
PROTESTORS AND IN FAVOR OF THE PINTADO BECAME MORE
APPARENT. MAN-ON-THE-STREET COMMENTS AND LETTERS TO THE
EDITORS INDICATE THAT THE VAST MAJORITY OF NEW ZEALANDERS
SHARED THE MEDIA REACTION. TYPICAL, BUT PERHAPS MORE
SENSATIONAL, OF THE PRESS COMMENT WAS A FRONT-PAGE
EDITORIAL BY THE "SUNDAY TIMES" SHOWING A PHOTO OF THE
YACHT WITH MAN, WOMAN WITH BABE IN ARMS, AND DOG
VIRTUALLY ON THE BOW OF THE PINTADO (REFTEL A). ENTITLED
"SHEER HORROR", THE "TIMES" EDITORIAL WHICH FOLLOWED
SAYS: QUOTE TAKE A GOOD LOOK AT THE PICTURES ON PAGE 1
AND PAGE 3 TODAY. THEY SHOW A BUNCH OF FOOLS PUTTING THE
LIVES OF OTHER PEOPLE -- INCLUDING A BABY -- IN DANGER.
THEY SHOW THE GROSS STUPIDITY, THE SELFISHNESS AND THE
ARROGANT IRRESPONSIBILITY OF SOME OF THE PINTADO PRO-
TESTORS. THEY SHOW THE COOL COURAGE OF THE POLICE AND
MILITARY PERSONNEL TRYING TO PROTECT THEM. THEY SHOW WHAT
CAN HAPPEN WHEN A MINORITY TRIES TO IMPOSE ITS WILL BY
FORCE. THIS WAS THE HORROR AND THE SHAME OF THE PINTADO
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PROTEST. THE "SUNDAY TIMES" TODAY CONGRATULATES THE
AUTHORITIES FOR THE WAY THEY HANDLED IT -- AND CONDEMNS
THE ACTIONS OF THOSE PROTESTORS WHO CROSSED BEYOND THE
BOUNDARY OF RESPONSIBILITY. THIS NEWSPAPER BELIEVES THAT
VISITS BY VESSELS SUCH AS THE PINTADO ARE A NECESSARY PART
OF THE REALITY OF THE 1970'S. IT ALSO RESPECTS THE RIGHT

OF PEOPLE TO PROTEST OTHERWISE. BUT THE PINTADO AFFAIR IN THE END WAS VIRTUALLY A COMBAT MISSION. AND IT WAS DEALT WITH ACCORDINGLY. WHEN IT WAS ALL OVER, THE RIGHT OF THE PINTADO TO ENTER HARBOR WAS FIRMLY ESTABLISHED -- THE PROTESTORS HAD PROVED AND GAINED NOTHING -- AND THE RIGHT TO PROTEST ITSELF HAD BEEN SMEARED. UNQUOTE. AN AVERAGE OF 300 INVITED VISITORS TOURED THE SHIP EACH DAY, INCLUDING A BROAD ARRAY OF AUCKLAND'S MEDIA, CIVIC, BUSINESS AND POLITICAL LEADERS.

(D) EXPOSURE OF ANTI-NPW PROTESTORS:

THE FULL MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE ANTI-PINTADO PROTEST ACTIVITIES HAS ENABLED MOST NEW ZEALANDERS TO ASSESS THE GROUP AS FOOL-HARDY ZEALOTS. THEIR ACTIONS ARE UNLIKELY TO HAVE ATTRACTED ADDITIONAL DEVOTEES AND LIKELY HAVE COST THEM CONSIDERABLE SOFT SUPPORT. EMBASSY SOURCES HAVE ADVISED THAT THE "PEACE SQUADRON" GROUP IS THOROUGHLY DEMORALIZED, FIRSTLY BY THE SHALLOWNESS OF ITS SUPPORT AND SECONDLY, BY THE COOL COORDINATION OF THE NZ AUTHORITIES. DESPITE THE "PEACE SQUADRON'S" BEST EFFORTS, THEY WERE PREVENTED FROM CREATING A REAL INCIDENT VIS-A-VIS THE PINTADO, THE POLICE MADE NO ARRESTS -- THUS DENYING THE PROTESTORS A MARTYR -- AND THE PROTESTORS THEMSELVES CAME

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ACTION EA-12

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CINCPAC HONOLULU
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CNO WASHDC
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ACROSS TO THE NZ PUBLIC AS THE REAL HEAVIES IN THE DRAMA.

(E) NO BACKLASH OF ANTI-AMERICANISM:

THE OPPOSITION LABOR PARTY HAS MAINTAINED FOR TWO YEARS THAT MANY -- AND PERHAPS EVEN MOST -- NEW ZEALANDERS OPPOSE THE VISIT OF NPW'S TO NZ PORTS. ROWLING'S TELEGRAM TO THE PRESIDENT MIRRORS THIS THEME AND, REFLECTING PARTY POLICY, WARNS THAT CONTINUED NPW VISITS WILL LEAD TO "UNNECESSARY EROSION OF THE GOODWILL" TOWARD THE US. WHILE IT MAY BE TOO CLOSE TO THE EVENT TO ACCURATELY ASSESS LONGER-TERM REACTION, THE EMBASSY HAS SEEN LITTLE, IF ANY INDICATION OF THIS ANTI-US BACKLASH. IN FACT, THESE EVENTS HAVE REVEALED AN UPSURGE OF PRO-US SUPPORT. RECENT PUBLIC OPINION POLLS INDICATE A CONTINUED DIMINUTION OF SUPPORT FOR ROWLING AND FOR LABOR. IN ANY EVENT, FEW NEW ZEALANDERS WOULD ARGUE AGAINST THE THESIS THAT IF PRIMIN
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MULDOON IS TO BE VULNERABLE IN 1978 ON ANY ISSUE IT WILL BE THE ECONOMY, NOT THE STRENGTH OF NEW ZEALAND'S POLITICAL AND SECURITY RELATIONS WITH THE US.

(F) WARM HOSPITALITY FOR PINTADO'S CREW:

ACCORDING TO THE PINTADO'S CO, HOSPITALITY EXTENDED TO HIS OFFICERS AND CREW IN AUCKLAND WAS ALMOST OVERWHELMING. THE WEATHER WAS HOT AND SUNNY, THE BEER COOL AND PLENTIFUL. IN EVERY WAY IMAGINABLE, AUCKLANDERS ENDEAVORED TO DEMONSTRATE THAT THE PINTADO AND HER MEN WERE TRULY WELCOMED.

3. POSSIBLE REPLY TO ROWLING, PRESUMABLY FOR SIGNATURE BY SENIOR DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL AND PROVIDED REFTEL B, HAS BEEN REVIEWED BY EMBASSY. EMBASSY CONCURS IN REPLY AS DRAFTED.

4. WHILE THERE ARE PERHAPS NUMEROUS REASONS FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE PINTADO VISIT, IT IS THE FIRM OPINION OF THE AMBASSADOR AND COUNTRY TEAM THAT CHIEF AMONG THESE IS GROWING PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE OF NPW VISITS AS ROUTINE. A FURTHER NPW VISIT WITHIN THE NEXT 90 DAYS WOULD CONSOLIDATE THE PROGRESS ALREADY ACHIEVED AND ENUMERATED IN PARA. 2. ADDITIONALLY, IT WOULD DEMONSTRATE WITH CLARITY THAT THE GNZ AND THE USG DO INDEED REGARD FUTURE NPW VISITS AS "ROUTINE."

5. ACTION REQUESTED: THAT ANOTHER NPW SUBMARINE BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR AN R&R PORT CALL IN WELLINGTON WITHIN THE NEXT 90 DAYS (BEFORE THE HEAT OF THE POLITICAL SEASON AND

A NOVEMBER 1978 ELECTION). THE PRIME MINISTER HAS INDICATED ALREADY THAT SUCH A VISIT WOULD BE WELCOMED.
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